

In the Specification:

Page 1, before the first line, insert "This is a divisional application of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/722,856 filed November 27, 2000, which has been allowed."

Page 3, please amend the paragraph beginning on line 20 as follows:

Since the utilization of the convenient bill acceptors has caused a dramatic shift in the drop received from a player from coins to currency or notes, it should be appreciated that the casino will need to retrieve the currency or notes received by the bill acceptors, and thus the cash boxes are periodically removed from the bill acceptors in the slot machines and taken to a counting room where the currency is removed and counted. Due to the volume of currency to be counted, this cyclic retrieval of the cash boxes and counting function can result in increased personnel costs as well as increased risk of theft. Accordingly, systems capable of [combing] combining the benefits of the bill acceptors and a more efficient method of payout reducing employee expenses and overhead would be tremendously beneficial to the gaming industry. In addition, other devices such as vending machines and paypoint service stations having bill acceptors and coin dispensers can suffer from similar or related problems, such as inability to provide change, running out of change and the like, and such devices could also benefit from an improved bill acceptor system.

Page 6, please amend the paragraph beginning on line 6 as follows:

Fig. 1 shows a gaming machine including the note acceptor-dispenser validator [which] according to the present invention;